

February 1, 1984

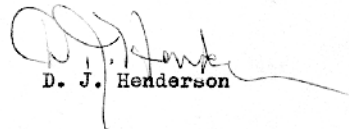
Very often, Newark citizens bring to your attention unsatisfactory conditions related to the operations of the City government. You explain to them, properly, that you are the legislative branch of the government and have no means or authority to act on their complaints but will refer them to, and request action by, the proper administrative agency. I understand this.

However, since this is the only forum where citizens are free to make their desires and opinions known, and since I believe that it is well that you should be aware of them, I have no apology for what I am going to say.

I learn from the press that the Mayor of Newark and one of his aides have accepted official positions in the campaign of a candidate for nomination by a political party for President of the United States. These positions are respectively state campaign chairman and state campaign coordinator. In taking these jobs, these men overlook or ignore an important aspect of their decisions. I do not believe that any public servant should be involved officially in any campaign other than his own. In this instance, there is the further consideration that the Mayor heads a non-partisan municipal government. His position as chairman of the campaign of any candidate is inappropriate, unethical and even of questionable legality. This is also true of his aide's position as campaign coordinator.

In any case, the citizens of Newark should not be required to pay the salaries and office expenses of officials in anybody's campaign. If these two men feel very deeply that they are indispensable to this campaign, they should take leaves of absence without pay and leave City Hall for its duration. They would retain their personal prestige, but not the prestige of functioning officials of the government of the City of Newark. We would find some use for our deputy mayors.

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D. J. Henderson